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Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

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Monday, 10 September 2001, 10.50 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Levitte	(France)
Members:	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	China	Mr. Chen Xu
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Mali	Mr. Touré
	Mauritius	Mr. Gokool
	Norway	Mr. Strømmen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Singapore	Mr. Yap
	Tunisia	Mr. Jerandi
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchinsky
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in East Timor.

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01-53171 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in East Timor

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Belgium, Chile, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand and Portugal, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Dauth (Australia), Mr. De Loecker (Belgium), Mr. Valdés (Chile), Mr. Hidayat (Indonesia), Mr. Satoh (Japan), Mr. MacKay (New Zealand) and Mr. Seixas da Costa (Portugal) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Guéhenno to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. As there is no list of speakers for this meeting, I would invite those who wish to take the floor to so indicate to the Secretariat as from now.

I give the floor to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno.

Mr. Guéhenno (*spoke in French*): Members of the Council will recall that on 23 August, the Secretariat provided a briefing on the preparations for the elections in Timor. I am pleased to report today that the elections for the Constituent Assembly of East Timor were held on 30 August in an orderly and peaceful manner. This historic event, in which 91 per cent of the electorate participated, occurred exactly two years to the day after the East Timorese voted overwhelmingly for independence on 30 August 1999.

Today, in Dili, the Independent Electoral Commission announced the final certified results and declared that the criteria for a free and fair election had been met. In their statement, the Commissioners went on to add that

> "all the evidence available to the Board suggests that the campaign was the most peaceful at any election organized, supervised and controlled or verified by the United Nations, and in general, more resembled an election campaign in a stable established democracy than a campaign in a country hosting a peacekeeping operation."

Of the 16 parties that contested the elections, 12 won seats in the 88-seat Constituent Assembly. The East Timor National Liberation Front (Fretilin), led by Francisco Guterres and Mari Alkatiri, received the strongest support: 57.4 per cent of the valid votes cast and 12 of the 13 district seats, giving it a total of 55 seats, which is five short of the majority needed to pass the constitution.

The determination of the East Timorese to embrace democracy was evident throughout the electoral process. During the campaign period, they demanded of the political parties their full adherence to the principles of the 8 July Pact of National Unity. Under the Pact, 14 of the 16 registered parties committed themselves to respecting the outcome of the election, to conducting themselves in a peaceful and mutually respectful fashion and to defending multi-party democracy. Campaigning centred largely on personalities, past records and symbols. Few formal complaints relating to campaigning offences were lodged and not one alleged breach of the Electoral Offences Regulation was upheld. At the conclusion of the campaign on 28 August, a "day of silence", during which all activities related to campaigning were prohibited, was observed.

On election day, 30 August, the 248 polling centres were run almost entirely by some 5,000 East Timorese. Many voters in rural districts travelled in family groups by foot throughout the night in order to arrive at polling stations by 7 a.m., while others slept outside them so as to be at the head of the queue. Crowds formed very early at the polling centres. Despite a delay in opening some of the locations and the need for electors to wait in line for several hours in the open sun, very few disturbances took place. Those that did happen were minor, resulting from the impatience of those waiting in line or the enthusiasm of voters casting their ballots for the second time in the recent history of East Timor. None of these incidents cast the least doubt on the integrity of the electoral process.

A number of polling sites remained open beyond the scheduled closing time of 4 p.m. to enable those still waiting on line to vote. In accordance with pre-established procedures, 11,999 voters whose names did not appear on the electoral role, but who had a proof of registration dated on or before 23 June, were allowed to vote. In total, some 382,968 East Timorese cast their ballot, approximately 91 per cent of the 421,018 eligible voters. By district, the lowest turnout was in Dili — "lowest" being a relative term, since participation there ran at over 88 per cent — while the highest was in Ermera, at 94 per cent.

No last-minute incidents of intimidation or other illegal activity were reported. Concerns that party "security groups" might turn out at polling stations on voting day to intimidate voters were not realized. In advance of 30 August, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Transitional Administrator, issued a public warning that their presence would not be tolerated. Throughout the day, the border with Indonesia remained open and normal crossings in both directions took place. Only six refugees, who had previously registered in East Timor then returned to West Timor, are known to have crossed back again in order to vote in Oecussi district.

Over 1,700 observers monitored the election, some 500 international monitors and 1,200 East Timorese belonging to local non-governmental organizations. Their reports have uniformly praised the conduct of the election and the manner in which the Timorese participated. Criticism, such as it has been, has focused on the inexperience of some of those responsible for polling stations, on the occasionally slow processing of voters and the crowds that formed as a result, and on some delays, such as at Dili, where polling booths remained open after the official closing hour.

Altogether, over 4,000 political party representatives and independent candidates were accredited and observed the electoral process, including the voting itself, the transportation of ballot boxes and the counting procedures, all of which was closely followed. Ballot boxes were transported to the counting centres that evening with one exception, due to poor road conditions. The boxes remained overnight under the guard of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) civilian police and were flown out the next morning to the central counting station. On 31 August, the ballot boxes were opened at the district counting centres and their contents reconciled with the polling records. After this verification, the ballots from the various polling centres were mixed to ensure that it would be impossible to determine the voting patterns of any village. Voting patterns can be identified only at the district level. Counting was closely followed by the observers.

The parties contesting the election raised a number of questions about spoiled and blank ballots. In the Aileu district, where over 40 per cent of the ballots cast were blank, a party which had failed to nominate a district candidate had actively encouraged the population to leave their ballots blank. However, the Independent Electoral Commission concluded that the overall percentage of invalid votes — approximately 5.4 per cent in the national ballot and 8.71 per cent in the district ballots — was well within acceptable parameters.

(*spoke in English*)

Provisional results were declared progressively during the course of last week and, on 6 September, the Independent Electoral Commission's Chief Officer, Mr. Carlos Valenzuela, released the uncertified overall results of the elections.

Those who wished to lodge complaints with the Independent Electoral Commission over the voting or counting process had a right to do so by 8 September. Three parties lodged formal complaints with the Independent Electoral Commission, alleging systemic problems with the conduct of the poll. None of their

complaints were upheld or considered serious enough to justify remedial action.

As I mentioned previously, the final certified result was announced today. Fretilin secured 55 of the 88 seats in the Constituent Assembly. Second- and third-placed in the results were two newly established parties, the Democratic Party and the Social Democratic Party winning seven and six seats respectively, or 8.7 per cent and 8.2 per cent of the national vote. Together, the two parties broadly represent the activists of the former National Council of Timorese Resistance.

The Timorese Social Democratic Association (ASDT) led by Francisco Xavier do Amaral — briefly the self-declared President of East Timor in 1975 — came in fourth with 7.8 per cent of the vote and six seats. It did particularly well in its central mountain strongholds, securing a higher vote than Fretilin in the district of Aileu.

Four other parties, all drawing their strength from social conservatives with traditionalist leanings — the Timor People's Party, KOTA, the Timorese National Party and the Christian Democratic Party — each gained two seats in the Assembly.

Independent national candidates did not fare well, none of them succeeding in gaining a seat. One district independent, however, did win in Oecussi. Twenty-three women members will be present in the 88-seat Assembly, a percentage of 27 per cent.

Altogether 12 parties will be represented in the Assembly, while four failed to gain entry. In an interesting development, the leader of the ASDT, Francisco Xavier do Amaral, has announced his willingness to form a coalition with Fretilin. Should this coalition materialize, Fretilin and ASDT would have a controlling majority in the Assembly.

The people of East Timor deserve to be congratulated on the manner in which the election was conducted. In a positive sign of future good relations, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Mr. Hassan Wirayuda, called Mr. Vieira de Mello on behalf of the Indonesian Government to congratulate the East Timorese for the orderly and peaceful conduct of the electoral process. At the same time, he extended an invitation from President Megawati Suekaronoputri to meet with Messrs. Vieira de Mello, Gusmão, Alkatiri and Ramos-Horta on 12 September. This will be the first meeting between the President and the leadership of East Timor.

In the next few days, Mr. Vieira de Mello hopes to announce the formation of a new Cabinet, which is expected to be composed entirely of East Timorese and to reflect broadly the election outcome. The inaugural session of the Constituent Assembly will be held on 15 September.

In the past, UNTAET had indications that some refugees in West Timor wished to return to East Timor, but did not do so out of fear of the past association of elections with violence. UNTAET and the Indonesian authorities are currently finalizing arrangements for what is hoped will be the return of an estimated 2,000 refugees from West Timor to East Timor's Ainaro district later this week.

As regards the return of an international presence to West Timor, members of the Council may recall that an inter-agency security assessment mission was dispatched to West Timor from 8 to 14 July. The mission recommended the conclusion of a memorandum of understanding between the Government of Indonesia and the United Nations specifying the exact security arrangements to be provided to United Nations personnel before United Nations agencies resume operations in West Timor. Once this memorandum of understanding is concluded, the security phase could be lowered from Five to Four in all districts in West Timor, except Belu district. A draft agreement is now being finalized.

In conclusion, the successful and peaceful conduct of the election and the commitment of the parties to the Pact of National Unity bode well for East Timor's future as an independent, democratic nation.

The next few months will indeed bring with them complex and difficult challenges. The members of the Constituent Assembly will soon begin drafting a constitution. Their challenge will be to live up to the expectations of the East Timorese who have entrusted them with the weighty responsibility of organizing a sustainable, democratic State. Concurrent with this process, UNTAET, together with the East Timorese Cabinet, will continue to lay the necessary foundations for effective and lean administrative structures. In this regard, Mr. Vieira de Mello intends to continue the process of delegating authority to the East Timorese within the parameters of resolutions 1272 (1999) and 1338 (2001).

The continued commitment and patience of the East Timorese and the confirmed strong support of the international community will be essential during this complex period and beyond independence if East Timor is to have a sustainable and democratic future.

The Secretary-General's report in October will present the planning for UNTAET's follow-on mission, which will be designed in cooperation with the East Timorese, to ensure that the tasks entrusted to the United Nations are completed in an effective manner.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations for his precise and comprehensive presentation of what can only be qualified as a success for the United Nations and for democracy and as a very encouraging sign for the future of East Timor.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): Today we have reached another very important and significant milestone in the long process of seeking independence for East Timor, one which in a sense began with the Agreement of May 1999.

We have seen again, as we saw during the Popular Consultation, in 1999, the appetite of the East Timorese people for democracy and for freedom of choice. We welcome very sincerely the outcome of the elections, which Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno has described to us today.

Mr. Ben Bradshaw, the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, was able to see for himself — during a visit to East Timor during the polling — the commendable way in which the elections were organized and the commendable way in which the East Timorese participated. We applaud the spirit with which the East Timorese approached the elections, which has laid down the right foundations for inclusive democracy for the future. We call on all the Timorese political parties to respect the outcome of the elections and to work together to draft the constitution and to prepare East Timor for independence.

Jean-Marie Guéhenno quite rightly congratulated the Timorese people on the conduct of the elections. But congratulations are also due to the United Nations — to the Secretary-General, to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and to Special Representative Sergio Vieira de Mello — for the impressive arrangements that were made for the elections and for the way in which they were organized to allow them to go off both peacefully and in a way that is more like, as Mr. Guéhenno also said, elections in a normally democratic country than in a country that is currently hosting a peacekeeping operation.

I think this is a proud moment in the history of United Nations peacekeeping operations. It is a proud moment not only because of the success that I have just described, but because, in a sense, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) is something very new, very complex and very challenging for the United Nations. The Organization has carried it off extremely well.

It is clearly important that the international community remains engaged in East Timor. The statement that you, Mr. President, will read at the end of this meeting will reiterate the importance that the Council attaches to a substantial international presence in East Timor post-independence. It is very important that the planning for that is done properly, done inclusively and done in the spirit of the Brahimi report, involving the whole United Nations system, because all the various constituent parts of our Organization, our system, our agencies will need to be involved in helping East Timor through that initial, difficult period immediately after independence.

We very much look forward to receiving the Secretary-General's report next month, outlining the proposed arrangements for the successor mission to UNTAET. We, and I am sure other members of the Council, will be looking at it very carefully — but also very sympathetically and with an eye to making sure that the United Nations can keep up the excellent record it has already begun with UNTAET.

The President (*spoke in French*): I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General among us.

Mr. Granovsky (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Today's consideration of the question of East Timor in the Security Council is marked by a singularly important event in the development of that territory, namely, the successful holding of elections to the Constitutional Assembly. As members of the Council are aware, the first general elections in East Timor took place freely and without any incident whatever, and enjoyed high voter turn-out. It is noteworthy that over 90 per cent of the electorate took part in the election.

That is undoubtedly an important achievement for both the East Timorese themselves and for the United Nations as a whole, which for two years now has been actively involved in determining the future of East Timor. Naturally, high marks also go to the activities of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), headed by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello.

In our view, the atmosphere in which the elections were held should cause us to take note of the consistent and good-neighbourly attitude of Indonesia. We are convinced that, in the interests of strengthening stability in the region, both the Indonesians and the East Timorese must do everything necessary to further nurture the first tender shoots of mutual understanding and respect.

The elections for the Constitutional Assembly were the first step towards the independence of East Timor since the 1999 referendum. The birth of a new State will undoubtedly be an important event in the life of the world community. But we should not forget that this very welcome fact will have to be accompanied by a great deal of work to consolidate the State structure, lay the foundations of the economy and build a democratic society. Naturally, responsibility for that lies first and foremost with the East Timorese themselves.

At the same time, no one should have any doubt that the international community must keep an eye on East Timor and give it all the help it can. The success that has been achieved by the United Nations in this territory should not turn into failure. We expect that, upon receipt of the Secretary-General's recommendations in October of this year, there will be a specific discussion of the form of a future United Nations presence in East Timor. It is our hope that no one will harbour any doubts about the actual presence of the United Nations in East Timor after independence. Its specific parameters will have to be agreed with the future Government of East Timor.

In conclusion, may I say that we believe the international community has every reason to give a positive assessment of the developments in East Timor and of the prospects for its development.

Mr. Cunningham (United States): I think the presence of the Secretary-General with us today signifies the import of the event that we are here discussing and commemorating. This is truly a rare example of good news and encouraging news, a cause for quite a bit of satisfaction. We now have democracy serving solidly as a base for movement ahead in East Timor. We have a solid basis via elections for a Constituent Assembly. Fretilin has a strong but not an overwhelming majority and will work with others to determine the future.

I applaud the Fretilin leaders who have asserted that their approach will be one of inclusion, seeking consensus on a modern and well-crafted constitution. This is certainly a wise approach for the long term and one that we expect will prove out and should be emulated.

The results of the election and Fretilin's commitment also honour the commitment of the people of East Timor to democracy and the elections, as was evident in Jean-Marie Guéhenno's briefing.

It is clear that the approach to and the conduct of the elections was an example to the world community, as the Secretary-General said recently, and as was also observed by a number of members of the international community, including the United States Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly, who was there with an American delegation. I want to join others who have congratulated the United Nations, the Secretary-General, Mr. Vieira de Mello and his colleagues at the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), the independent electoral commission, and certainly the Timorese themselves.

We support Mr. Vieira de Mello's intent, as the transitional leader, to form a new all-Timorese cabinet that reflects the spirit and results of the elections. We also find very welcome the news that Mr. Vieira de Mello and East Timorese leaders will meet soon with Indonesian President Megawati. Certainly dialogue is the way to move forward and the way to resolve the issues that are still outstanding.

I also want to recall, as Mr. Guéhenno did, the East Timorese refugees that are still in West Timor. We hope that reports that a large group of refugees may participate in returns to the East this week are borne out and that this will be a beginning of movement of all those who wish to return. We hope that the success of the elections encourages confidence in that respect.

Mr. Ryan (Ireland): I agree with Ambassador Cunningham that the presence here today of Secretary-General Annan marks the importance for the United

Nations of recent developments in East Timor. We are grateful for today's briefing from Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and for the opportunity provided by this meeting to review those developments, particularly the handling of recent elections there.

The representative of Belgium will shortly deliver a statement on behalf of the European Union. As Ireland subscribes fully to the views described in it, I will therefore make only a few specific comments.

Ireland warmly welcomes the fact that elections on 30 August took place in a calm and peaceful atmosphere. The impeccable character and conduct of the elections are indeed very heartening. We are encouraged by the extremely high voter turnout, which is a clear sign of the determination of the East Timorese people to establish full control over their own political destiny. We congratulate them and their leaders for the courage and vision they have displayed over the past two years in preparing for this important event.

We encourage the various political parties to continue to demonstrate the responsibility they displayed in the run-up to the elections. We also congratulate the staff of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) for their continuing commitment, their hard work and their professionalism.

We welcome the cooperation extended by the Government of Indonesia during the election period, and we are greatly encouraged by the information provided by Mr. Guéhenno about the meeting to be held in Jakarta on Wednesday among President Megawati Sukarnoputri, Special Representative Sergio Vieira de Mello and members of the East Timorese Transitional Administration.

The holding of elections represents a crucial step in the complex and lengthy process of transition towards independence. We wish those elected every success in the difficult task of drafting a constitution. We continue to believe that a substantial international presence will be necessary after independence, and in this regard we look forward to the recommendations of the Secretary-General in his October report, and to further discussions on the matter.

For its part, Ireland remains committed to supporting East Timor up to and beyond independence. I agree very strongly with Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno's statement this morning in this regard.

Finally, Ireland supports the presidential statement, which we believe provides a balanced view of Security Council policy towards East Timor and fully reflects the tone of discussions here today.

Mr. Strømmen (Norway): Allow me to avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate and compliment the United Nations and the East Timorese people on the accomplishment of a very successful election for a Constituent Assembly in East Timor on 30 August.

We are particularly pleased with the fact that the first democratic election was conducted in a fair and peaceful manner, free of incidents. This historic moment will be remembered as a demonstration of the eagerness of the East Timorese to confront their differences and to actively take part in the formation of their nation's future.

Moreover, the massive voter turnout is a clear indication of the capacity of the East Timorese people to exercise their democratic rights without fail. Norway was one of the first countries to send an official delegation to the territory following the 1999 turmoil. Bearing in mind what we were confronted with as we arrived in Dili in November 1999, it was indeed encouraging and touching to witness the commitment and eagerness of the East Timorese in front of the polling centres on August 30 this year.

I would like to take this opportunity to urge the political parties to live up to their obligations as manifested in the Pact of National Unity. Respect for the outcome of the election will be one of the first milestones in the foundation of an independent, democratic nation and an important part of securing a political atmosphere conducive to optimizing the framework for a peaceful and democratic environment.

East Timor is again entering a challenging phase. The declaration of independence is approaching, and the people have chosen a Constituent Assembly that will be a crucial asset in the process of transforming East Timor into an independent nation. For a successful drafting of the constitution, the Assembly will need the full support of the political leaders and the constituencies, as well as of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the international community.

The months to come will also bring new challenges for UNTAET. It is now of vital importance that the process of Timorization continues. The election of the Constituent Assembly also implies that UNTAET has to adjust its routines, as from now on the mission has to respond to a democratically elected body. This adjustment is crucial with regard to UNTAET's responsible and smooth withdrawal, and it is a very important step on East Timor's path towards independence.

The East Timorese experience has in many ways been unique and overwhelmingly positive. Seldom has a United Nations mission been given such a complex and wide-ranging mandate. It is now of vital importance that UNTAET and its partners are given sufficient resources so that they can complete the task given to them by this Council. We therefore urge the members of the Security Council and other donor countries to continue their support for East Timor during the transition and throughout the post-independence period.

Finally, let me reiterate that in order to ensure a sustainable peace and the establishment of vital institutions, it is of crucial importance that the United Nations remains in East Timor until such institutions have been put on a solid footing. In this regard we look forward to receiving the Secretary-General's October report with comprehensive recommendations as to the size, composition and mandate of an integrated civilian and military United Nations mission to follow UNTAET.

Mr. Jerandi (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Mr. Guéhenno for his briefing on the historic developments that took place recently in East Timor.

These first elections in the history of East Timor confirm once again the will of the Timorese people to go forward in laying the foundation for a pluralistic and democratic State. In this regard, my delegation emphasizes with satisfaction the exemplary way in which these elections were held. We would like to recall at this time that the parties committed themselves, when they the signed the Pact for National Unity, to respecting the verdict of this vote. We remind them of this commitment today in order that they should adopt a policy of tolerance and mutual respect.

What is important today is not the success of one party or another, but rather the success of a process that has benefited from the support of the United Nations, its agencies, non-governmental organizations and the international community as a whole. We must continue to lend support, particularly at this crucial stage, as the first constitution of that country is being drawn up, which will lay the foundation for the new East Timorese society, as well as the principles that will further guide it in its subsequent choices.

These elections make it possible for us to move from a Transitional Administration to an independent East Timorese Government. It will probably have to face a number of problems and challenges that it will have to meet in order to govern the country in a viable way and promote a climate favourable to development.

A United Nations presence, reinforced by substantial international financial assistance, will therefore be essential. We therefore hope to receive further details in the forthcoming report of the Secretary-General on the form that the United Nations presence will take in East Timor after independence.

In our view, however, two concepts are of crucial importance. At this and subsequent stages, we must have a strategy for withdrawal and for consolidating peace. We believe that East Timor must initially establish relations of good neighbourliness with the countries of the region. We would also like to emphasize the importance of consolidating trust and reconciliation between Indonesia and East Timor. The Indonesian authorities, for their part, have frequently demonstrated their readiness to establish friendly relationships and to set up a machinery for dialogue and concerted action in order to resolve pending questions. We are very grateful to them.

Finally, we would like to congratulate the Under-Secretary-General on the success of the United Nations. We would also like to congratulate Mr. Vieira de Mello, all the men and women of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor and all the volunteers for their efforts throughout this process to guarantee the orderly conduct of these elections, which is so important for the future of the people of East Timor.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): We welcome very much the presence of the Secretary-General at this meeting, which records a significant success of the United Nations. We would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his useful briefing on

the various aspects of the election for the Constituent Assembly in East Timor.

The Council takes up East Timor at a historic moment. The world has witnessed a remarkable election there as it prepares to emerge as the first independent State in the new millennium. I say it is remarkable for the spirit of peace, maturity and tolerance that every individual East Timorese and the political parties have shown throughout the campaign period and during the polls on 30 August. Through a voter turnout as high as 91 per cent, the East Timorese have shown their belief in participatory democracy. Our warmest felicitations therefore go to the people and leadership of East Timor for setting such a glowing example to the world, as the Secretary-General himself described in his statement immediately after the polls were closed.

At the same time, we pay our tribute to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Sergio Vieira de Mello, and to all his colleagues in the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor for their untiring efforts over the last two years in reviving lives and livelihoods and re-establishing the institutions of government. These are critical building blocks towards full independence. Sergio Vieira de Mello is in Dili today for the important election-certification ceremony of the Independent Electoral Commission in East Timor. We hope to have an opportunity to pay a tribute to him in person.

Bangladesh warmly congratulates the East Timor National Liberation Front and its leader, Xanana Gusmão, for their important victory in the election. The securing of 27 per cent of the 88-member Assembly by women candidates is another indicator of the political maturity of the Timorese people.

At this stage, Bangladesh should emphasize two aspects. First, with the election over, it is time that the Council pledge its firm support to the critical second phase of work in East Timor: the establishment of an effective and efficient Government, institutions and a viable and vibrant economic structure.

The presidential statement that the Council will adopt later reiterates the importance of a substantial international presence post-independence, and Bangladesh would underscore the need for a United Nations engagement in East Timor until its job is fully accomplished in the post-independent period.

There was a general consensus in the open briefing of 30 July that United Nations assistance in East Timor will constitute the core of all international assistance in various areas. We hope that the Secretary-General's comprehensive report, due next month on the United Nations presence in post-independent East Timor, will reflect this aspect adequately.

Secondly, the Government of Indonesia extended its cooperation during the critical phase of East Timor's transition towards independence. We highly commend Indonesia and its people for playing a constructive role in that regard. At the same time, we hope that, in the course of Xanana Gusmão's meeting in Jakarta with the Indonesian leadership on Wednesday, the new Indonesian Government will realize the expectation and importance of cooperation with and support to East Timor in its transition to independence.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): Jamaica joins in welcoming the successful outcome of elections in East Timor. We are pleased that the process was a smooth one, marked by a high turnout of voters and conducted in an atmosphere of calm and order. In this regard, I wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his comprehensive report on the proceedings.

We are heartened to note that the elections received a clean bill of health from the numerous international observers. This was due in no small measure to the people of East Timor and to their demonstrated dedication to creating a viable democracy; to the leadership of the Secretary-General — and in this regard we are pleased that he has joined us; to the work of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) under the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Sergio Vieira de Mello; and to the support received from the international community, including United Nations volunteers and representatives of non-governmental organizations.

It is clear that the wishes of the people of East Timor are reflected in the election results and that the different parties in the Constituent Assembly reflect the views of all sectors of society. The work of the newly elected Constituent Assembly begins at a crucial point in the democratic life of East Timor and we encourage continued cooperation between the newly elected leaders and UNTAET. The work on the constitution is extremely important to the future of East Timor, as it

will provide a foundation, terms of reference and information on rights and responsibilities that will hold society together and guide the actions of the people of East Timor. We wish to stress the importance of finding common ground with regard to the drafting of the constitution and the need for those intimately involved to work in a spirit of cooperation and compromise.

The successful holding of elections in East Timor must encourage the international community to stay the course and to continue to support the East Timorese. It also gives us great hope for the future of East Timor. Work must continue on reconciliation, on the refugee situation in West Timor and on the security situation there, as well as on capacity-building and economic viability. It is clear that the people of East Timor will require the assistance of the international community after independence, and we look forward to the report of the Secretary-General that is due in October and the guidelines that it will provide for the future mandate of the United Nations in East Timor.

Jamaica wishes the people of East Timor well as they prepare for independence.

Mr. Touré (Mali) (*spoke in French*): I, in my turn, would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this morning's meeting, which is devoted to consideration of the outcome of the elections of 30 August 2001 for the first Constituent Assembly in East Timor — a decisive step on the road towards the creation of an independent State. I would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for sharing with us the excellent news about the arrangements for and outcome of that historic election, organized by the United Nations. Of course, we would also like to welcome the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, to this important meeting.

It is noteworthy that the first election in the chaotic history of East Timor took place in a spirit of calm and celebration on 30 August 2001, exactly two years after the territory chose independence in a referendum. There can be no doubt today that East Timor has resolutely committed itself to the path of democracy. Indeed, the election of 88 members of the Constituent Assembly of East Timor, who will have three months to draw up a constitution, is a decisive step towards a hard-won freedom. The impressive turnout of 91 per cent is a concrete manifestation of the commitment, maturity and sense of political responsibility of the people of East Timor and their leaders.

The success of the elections that we are celebrating today was due above all to the people of East Timor and their leaders, who have demonstrated an impressive degree of political maturity; to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), which did everything possible to ensure that the elections were free, transparent, peaceful and honest; to the Government of Indonesia, whose cooperation should be welcomed; and, of course, to the entire international community, whose political and financial support for East Timor has remained steadfast since 1999.

My delegation would like to pay a warm tribute to the people of East Timor for its huge turnout in the election on 30 August and to the leaders of the political parties who decided to respect the results of the election and behaved in a peaceful and mutually respectful manner during the course of the election.

We would also like to express our full satisfaction with the enormously important role played by UNTAET, which enabled the inclusive election in East Timor to be organized and held in good order. We would also like to reaffirm Mali's firm support for the remarkable work done by UNTAET, under the effective leadership of Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, in helping to achieve independence for East Timor, the Timorization of the Administration and the foundation of an independent Government in East Timor.

In conclusion, my delegation is looking forward to the October report of the Secretary-General, in which he will outline the new mission to succeed UNTAET. There can be no doubt that East Timor will still need the assistance of the international community after it attains national sovereignty, and the international community must shoulder its responsibilities with regard to the emerging democracy in East Timor.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I, too, would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his very detailed report and to add my voice to the unanimous expressions of satisfaction at this important event, of which our Organization can be proud and pleased. It reflects well on, among others, our Secretary-General, who is honouring us today with his presence.

While it can be said that there were some concerns and genuine fears at the possibility of political violence, we are truly delighted to be able to note that the democratic process took place peacefully and without violence. The Timorese managed to overcome the ghosts of the past associated with the violence that followed the popular consultation held two years ago. This shows that the Pact of National Unity is being complied with.

We would also like to join those who have congratulated the people of East Timor for the massive and unprecedented voter turnout of over 90 per cent of registered voters participated. We would like to congratulate Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello; Mr. Carlos Valenzuela, head of the Independent Electoral Commission of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET); to all the personnel of UNTAET; and to the volunteers for their organization of and active participation in this important event.

A crucial exercise will take place on 15 September, when the Constituent Assembly will begin work on drafting a new constitution. It will have 90 days in which to do so. Although the East Timor National Liberation Front won a clear majority, it was not a decisive one. We hope that, as announced, it will be able to join forces with representatives of minority parties in order to craft a constitution that will identify and support the needs of all Timorese.

We support Mr. Vieira de Mello's proposal to create a new transitional Government that will have an all-Timorese ministerial cabinet. As we affirmed earlier, the election of the Constituent Assembly is a new step on the road towards national reconciliation. It is indispensable, however, for the truth and reconciliation commission to be set up. In order to secure the viability of the future State, the international community must continue to support that process. We therefore hope that, in October, when we receive a detailed report on UNTAET's proposals, it will be possible to define how to maintain a United Nations presence during the post-independence phase.

Finally, we would like to express our support for the contents of the presidential statement to be adopted later.

Mr. Gokool (Mauritius): My delegation joins other delegations in thanking the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Guéhenno, for his informative briefing on the elections in East Timor. Indeed, the Constitutional Assembly elections held on 30 August, with a high level of popular participation in the vote, are indeed a glowing example to the world community.

My delegation commends the exemplary behaviour and maturity of the East Timorese people in this regard. The indomitable drive for self-rule and their strong desire to lead the country to independence have today borne their fruit. They are now only a step away from attaining nationhood, which is a legitimate expectation cherished by all and which will be concretized in the very near future. We also note with appreciation the election of 23 women.

My delegation expresses its appreciation to the people of East Timor, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), and all the parties and international agencies who have left no stone unturned in making the election a resounding success.

At this juncture, there is no doubt that East Timor is moving forward to achieve its historical course. My delegation extends its very best wishes and reconfirms its support for the consolidation of the gains of the first democratic elections. At the same time, we should not, as a main party committed to the peace process in East Timor, be complacent. Our responsibility is now to see how we can expedite the constitutional process that would give the people of East Timor a constitution reflecting their legitimate aspirations and objectives and guaranteeing all rights and fundamental freedoms without any discrimination. We are sure that an all-inclusive approach, with the voluntary return of the refugees, will further consolidate fraternity and will help in the nation-building in East Timor.

We commend the invitation extended to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General by the Indonesian President and Indonesia's congratulatory message to UNTAET and to the people of East Timor on the successful and peacefui election. Indeed, it augurs well for fruitful bilateral relations between the two countries. Like everyone else, we maintain that a solid bilateral relation based on mutual confidence and pragmatism will help East Timor through its reconstruction programme and will enhance regional cooperation.

Finally, on the question of international presence in East Timor, we agree on the concept of right-sizing.

In this regard, we support the draft presidential statement calling for a substantial international presence in East Timor after independence.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): I would like to join others in welcoming the Secretary-General's presence at this important meeting of the Security Council, which marks a significant achievement of the United Nations. I wish to thank the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Guéhenno, for his comprehensive briefing. We are glad to hear the good news today.

We welcome the successful holding on 30 August of the elections for the Constituent Assembly in a democratic and transparent manner. We highly appreciate the relevant activities of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the Transitional Cabinet, as well as the restraint and patience exercised by all political parties. We also note with satisfaction the cooperation shown by the Government of Indonesia.

We believe it is extremely important to avoid confrontation within East Timorese society after the elections. We are of the opinion that this should remain one of the priorities for UNTAET. It is also essential to ensure the smooth formation of the Constituent Assembly and the new Cabinet, and to maintain a peaceful environment for the debate over the first constitution of East Timor.

Taking into account the shortage of adequate qualifications among the East Timorese, UNTAET, in our view, should pay special attention to providing relevant assistance to the citizens who were elected to the Assembly, preparing them for good governance and for the creation of a new civilized democratic society in this territory, which has suffered so much and which has never experienced democracy. The drafting of the constitution will also require the assistance of the international community.

We consider that the election of 30 August became an extraordinary event on the way to the independence of East Timor. At the same time, we are aware that a great deal remains to be done to achieve independence, and it will continue to require international support and United Nations leadership and participation. Ukraine is ready to continue to support the efforts of UNTAET towards the practical implementation of the aspirations of the people of East Timor.

Finally, we would like to voice our full support for the presidential statement on the issue.

Mr. Chen Xu (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): We also welcome the presence of the Secretary-General at this very important meeting. We thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his important briefing, as do the other members of the Council, concerning the successful holding of elections for the Constituent Assembly. We wish to express our gratification.

This is a very important step in the independence process for East Timor. It will also establish solid foundations for peace, stability, prosperity in East Timor after independence. We appreciate the efforts made by the East Timorese leaders and congratulate the East Timorese people for their participation in the election and for the spirit they have demonstrated.

We wish to congratulate the elected members of the Assembly. We appreciate the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) under the leadership of Mr. Vieira de Mello for the great amount of work they have done towards the successful holding of the elections. We also appreciate the efforts made by the Government of Indonesia for the election.

Mr. Guéhenno mentioned in his briefing that after elections there will be a great amount of work to do. We believe that the members of the Constituent Assembly will shoulder the responsibilities entrusted to them and show themselves worthy of the trust placed in them by the East Timorese people. We call upon the international community to continue to provide the necessary assistance to the East Timorese people. The Chinese delegation supports maintaining a substantial international presence in East Timor after independence.

We are looking forward to the Secretary-General's report due in October, which will outline concrete recommendations in this area. Finally, we support the presidential statement to be adopted at the conclusion of this meeting.

Mr. Yap (Singapore): We welcome the Secretary-General's presence at this meeting. It shows the importance that he and the United Nations attach to East Timor. We would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his detailed and comprehensive briefing.

We are pleased to note that the Constituent Assembly elections were a smooth and peaceful affair, as we had hoped. It was also heartening to us that there was such a large turnout at the polls. These are encouraging signs for East Timor's democratic transition.

The people of East Timor must be congratulated. Also, the United Nations and the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) must be commended for the good work they are doing in East Timor, which has been valuable in East Timor's transition.

The election results show that no political party has an outright, controlling two-thirds majority in the Constituent Assembly. There were also sharp differences in the voting in the various districts. Therefore, as the Constituent Assembly and the new Cabinet are being formed and the constitution is being worked out, we urge continued concord and tolerance among the political parties and the East Timorese people. The strong support of the political parties and the population for the Pact of National Unity must continue.

It cannot be overemphasized that the potential for instability and a certain level of vulnerability remain even after the elections. The elections, therefore, should not signal the end of UNTAET and the United Nations considerable engagement in East Timor. On the contrary, the United Nations must continue to keep vigilant watch over East Timor. It should especially not be making plans for its early exit or substantial withdrawal from East Timor at this juncture. Besides potentially unravelling all the good that the United Nations has done in East Timor, this could also send the wrong signal to the East Timorese people. The United Nations should instead studiously work out how it can and should prevent worse-case scenarios from happening. The key to this is a continued, substantial United Nations and international presence in East Timor, even after its independence.

We look forward to the Secretary-General's report on the successor mission to UNTAET post independence and we fully support the presidential statement to be adopted at the conclusion of this meeting.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now say a few words in my capacity as representative of France.

In a few minutes, the European Union, speaking through its Presidency, Belgium, will say what the 15 members of the Union feel today. I join with the previous speakers in congratulating the two first winners of this exemplary election. First of all, the Timorese themselves have displayed their political maturity, which is all the more remarkable in that this is only the second election held in 25 years.

I would also like to congratulate the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), under the remarkable, inspired leadership of Sergio Vieira de Mello, as well as the person responsible for the electoral process, Carlos Valenzuela. When we think about the violence that occurred in the wake of the referendum on self-determination only two years ago, we can fully grasp the magnitude of the advances.

Another very positive element has been Indonesia's response, which augurs well for the relationship that will develop between the two States once East Timor is fully independent.

France today congratulates all the elected officials and wishes them every success in the crucial task that lies before them. They will have to lay the constitutional foundations on which democracy in East Timor can be built in a lasting manner.

Next month, on the basis of the Secretary-General's report, we will have to join forces to define the way in which the international presence should evolve in order to best prepare for and accompany East Timor's independence. France wishes to emphasize from this day on its conviction that, in a manner that will obviously be different, international support will continue to be necessary if the soon-to-be independent East Timorese people is to benefit not only from independence, but also from the social and economic development to which it has been aspiring for so long.

Today is a day for celebration. Let us all celebrate together the remarkable success and clear round that the United Nations has just scored.

I now resume my responsibilities as President of the Council. I shall give the floor to the speakers who are not members of the Council and who have expressed the wish to speak.

The first speaker is the representative of Belgium. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. De Loecker (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the member of the European Economic Space, Liechtenstein, associate themselves with this statement.

The European Union would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Guéhenno, for having officially confirmed the result of the election of 30 August. We have met today to welcome this moment, which has often, and with reason, been described as historic.

Ten days ago the East Timorese people took part in democratic elections with great wisdom and serenity. The European Union observer mission on the ground reported that the elections to the Constituent Assembly took place calmly and peacefully. We would like to congratulate the East Timorese people and their leaders for having successfully completed this first, but crucial, step on the road to the establishment of democratic political institutions in the future Timorese State. The long independence process, which the European Union fully supports, has today brought its reward.

We welcome particularly the significant representation of women in the Constituent Assembly. The European Union would also like to congratulate the United Nations, whose Transitional Administration has made possible the success of the electoral process, for which they prepared with great professionalism.

The popular will freely expressed during these elections must be followed by the representatives of the Constituent Assembly during the three months granted to them to discuss and draft the constitution of the future State of East Timor. We wish them much success in performing this important task.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Australia. I invite him take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Dauth (Australia): I will be very brief, but it would be wrong for Australia not to today join with others in thanking Mr. Guéhenno and his team for the excellent report they provided us with and in welcoming very warmly the successful staging of the elections for East Timor's first Constituent Assembly. We want also to associate ourselves with others in congratulating very warmly my friend Sergio Vieira de Mello and his entire team at the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and all of those who were responsible for ensuring that the election process was peaceful, transparent and fair. We, too, would like to join others in warmly congratulating Indonesia for the highly constructive role that it has played before, during and after the elections. Above all, we pay tribute to the people of East Timor, whose overwhelming participation in the election process demonstrated yet again their shared determination to move towards an independent and democratic future.

The establishment of a multi-party Constituent Assembly in the coming weeks marks, of course, the beginning of a new phase in the transition to independence and we wish them well in their important immediate task in drafting a Constitution for the new State. The broad representation of parties in the Constituent Assembly should help in this process and we, like others, are particularly encouraged by the commendable presence their of 23 women.

Australia is, of course, a close and supportive neighbour of East Timor and we will continue to cooperate closely with its people, their elected representatives and the Timorese Cabinet as they work through the coming phase of the transition.

Finally, may I say how much we look forward to working with the Council in the coming months as it begins to address the key decisions which will determine the future United Nations presence in East Timor and the assistance it will offer to the independent East Timorese Government. Strong ongoing support from the Council through the provision of a sound funding base and through sound strategic planning will be critical to ensuring a peaceful and sustainable outcome in that new country.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker is the Ambassador of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Satoh (Japan): I would like to express my appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this open meeting on this very important day in the history of East Timor.

First of all, we welcome the fact that the elections on 30 August for the Constituent Assembly in East Timor were conducted in a peaceful and orderly manner. The very high turnout is a clear testimony to the East Timorese people's determination to participate in the nation-building process. It is also the result of the strenuous efforts made by the Independent Electoral Commission, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Japanese Government pays high tribute to all those organizations which have contributed to the success of the elections.

Recognizing the importance of the elections, Japan dispatched a team of electoral observers and provided financial support amounting to $1.2 million through UNDP electoral assistance projects.

Now that the elections have been successfully held, we would like to urge all parties to fully respect the results and to unite towards nation-building. It is particularly important that the new Constituent Assembly work on the drafting of the constitution in a balanced, inclusive and cooperative manner, for the purpose of their work is to create the very foundation of nation-building in East Timor. Needless to say, the way the Constituent Assembly discharges its responsibility will have a defining impact on the future governance of the country.

The forthcoming formation of the Timorese Transitional Government will be an important step towards self-governance, but we have to acknowledge that there will remain certain areas where UNTAET must continue its activities in accordance with the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council. Close cooperation between UNTAET and the Timorese Government will therefore be essential to attain the orderly transition to independence.

The planning for a follow-on mission of UNTAET is another important issue which the international community must address. In order to make the future process predictable and therefore stable, it is critical for the Security Council to clearly define at an early stage the shape of the follow-on mission, including its function, composition, required financial resources, necessary procedures and time-frame, taking into account the needs and security conditions on the ground in East Timor and, indeed, the wishes of the Timorese people.

In light of what we see on the island, we strongly believe that the United Nations should continue its military and civilian police presence, as well as a minimum and indispensable civilian personnel presence. We hope that the Secretary-General will carefully examine such needs as he compiles his recommendations to submit to the United Nations membership in October.

The successful elections are truly a cause for celebration for everybody involved, but the elections are only one step, albeit a major one, towards the achievement of an independent East Timor. Many more difficult issues will have to be addressed by the Timorese people, as well as by the international community, in order to ensure the successful attainment of independence for that island nation.

External support and assistance will be essential for nation-building not only before, but also after independence. I would therefore like to conclude this statement by reaffirming the Japanese Government's commitment to supporting East Timor as it engages itself in nation-building in the years to come.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker is the representative of Portugal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Seixas da Costa (Portugal): Let me start by thanking you, Sir, for convening this meeting. I also want to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his briefing on the outcome of the election for the Constituent Assembly in East Timor.

Previous interventions have already highlighted the importance of the elections as a milestone in the overall transition of East Timor to independence and in the setting-up of democratic institutions in the new country.

We must congratulate the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and its entire staff, in particular Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, for a job very well done. Overcoming that further challenge on the way to independence was possible due only to the commitment of all the staff on the ground, as well as to the support of the international community as a whole. Portugal is proud to be one of the major contributors to this effort.

My country participated in the observer missions of the European Union and the Community of

Portuguese-Speaking Countries to the elections of 30 August. We fully associate ourselves with the statements that both organizations have made in this regard, in particular, with the statement just made by the Presidency of the European Union to the Council.

We also sent a national team of both government and civil society representatives to observe the elections in all 13 districts. We welcome the peaceful and generally orderly manner in which the election took place. We have every reason to believe that this was a free, fair and transparent exercise.

Today, we must, above all, pay tribute to the people of East Timor and their political parties. Once again, they demonstrated incredible political maturity and tolerance. For their behaviour during the electoral campaign and for the high voter turnout on election day, they deserve our respect and our confidence.

We trust that all the political parties will accept the results of the ballot and the will of the people expressed therein. In this regard, Portugal welcomes statements by different political parties reiterating their commitment to peaceful implementation of the results, as well as the statements by the winning party that it is ready to engage in an all-inclusive Cabinet. We hope that the work of the Constituent Assembly will reflect the spirit of cooperation and national unity. I cannot fail to underline that the East Timorese elected 23 women to the Constituent Assembly, 27 per cent of the total number of deputies.

We have come a long way since the troubled times of September 1999. Today, the situation in East Timor has developed in a way that most of us did not think possible when UNTAET was created. The same effort that the international community made in East Timor at that time must now be continued during the transition to independence and beyond. The Timorese expect as much and deserve no less.

As always, Portugal is committed to remaining at the forefront of these efforts.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now call on the last speaker on my list, the representative of New Zealand. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hughes (New Zealand): Thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to speak today. May we also express our thanks to Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his excellent briefing this morning on the result of the election in East Timor.

It is indeed with great pleasure that we join with others who have spoken earlier in warmly congratulating the people of East Timor on the successful completion of their first democratic elections. The high voter turnout and the peaceful and tolerant environment in which votes were cast are evidence of the commitment of the East Timorese people to the process towards independence. We look forward to the announcement of the inaugural meeting of the East Timorese Constituent Assembly as an important step towards that goal.

We also extend our congratulations to the United Nations on the smooth arrangements for the election, which, in our view, establishes a new benchmark for future United Nations missions. The New Zealand observer team's report adds to the international consensus that the ballot was free, fair and credible. The international community and the people of East Timor should have great confidence in the integrity of the election outcome.

The conduct and successful staging of these elections also provides an excellent basis for the planning of the successor mission to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). New Zealand has previously stated its strong belief that the United Nations must equip East Timor to take full responsibility for its own affairs.

We continue to be convinced that the Security Council must remain focused and committed to maintaining a United Nations military, police and civilian presence in East Timor until such time as the new country has established a truly self-sustaining administration and the security situation is no longer of concern. We look forward, therefore, to the Secretary-General's report due next month, which will recommend the size, shape and timetable for the successor mission to UNTAET.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.